



Frequently Asked Questions

Summer 2006

The following questions and answers provide background information about the Magnolia Bridge Project.

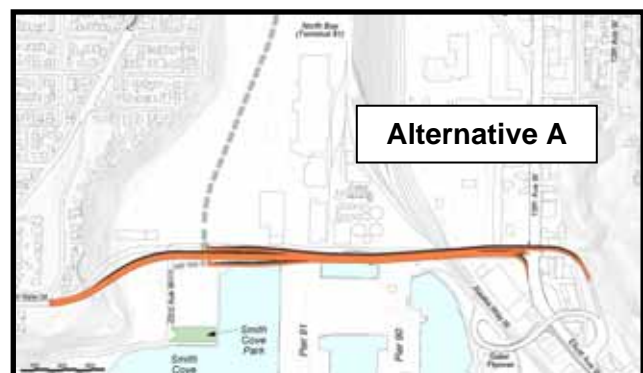
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Why is the Magnolia Bridge being replaced?

SDOT commissioned a Type, Size, and Location study after the 3,000-foot Magnolia Bridge sustained damage in the 1997 landslide and the Nisqually earthquake of 2001. Although the bridge was repaired and is now safe for motorists to use, it would be at risk if another seismic event were to occur. The cost of making seismic upgrades and bringing the bridge up to current codes approaches the cost of replacing the bridge with a new facility.

Which alternative was selected?

In March 2006, Mayor Greg Nickels directed the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to choose Alternative A as the preferred alternative to replace the Magnolia Bridge. Alternative A replaces the existing bridge with a new structure immediately south of the existing bridge. Ramps would provide access from the bridge's mid-span to the waterfront and the Port of Seattle's uplands property. Connections at the east and west ends of the bridge would be similar to the existing bridge.



See the project website for a more detailed graphic:
www.seattle.gov/transportation/magbridgereplace.htm



Alternative A was selected as the preferred alternative because it:

- Responds to local transportation needs
- Was a strong alternative based on environmental and technical analysis
- Received significant neighborhood, business, and governmental agency support
- Provides the least disruption to residents on Magnolia's eastern edge and businesses located under the bridge
- Allows Interbay business owners greater certainty in planning for future expansion or development
- Costs less than other proposed alternatives

What is a Type, Size and Location Study?

A Type, Size, and Location (TS&L) Study fine-tunes the design of the alternative selected to replace the bridge. The project team has been working with the community Design Advisory Group and the public to choose architectural elements, structural features, lighting, and other details to create a safe and dependable project that reflects the local community.

When will construction start?

The TS&L Study will be completed as the project team completes environmental documentation, likely in late 2006. The City will then complete final design work, complete required permitting, and secure construction funding. Under the best-case scenario, and **if funding is secured**, construction could begin in approximately three years, by about 2009.

How long will the bridge be closed? Will there be a detour?

SDOT plans to have a detour route open at all times during bridge construction. The project team currently estimates that bridge construction will require a detour of 14 to 20 months, and is working hard to find creative solutions to minimize detour time.

What detour routes are being considered for when the bridge is closed?

SDOT is working with the Port of Seattle to develop detour concepts, though the final route may not be determined until construction starts. Two promising options have emerged (though others are possible):

1. Using a mix of temporary ramps and the existing bridge during construction. Much of Alternative A would be built just south of the existing bridge, which would allow vehicles to continue using portions of the existing bridge during construction.
2. Using the existing facility or Galer Flyover to cross the railroad tracks from 15th Ave W to Port property, then using a surface route just west of the railroad tracks traveling north and connecting with 21st Ave North.

Another surface route would likely connect from 21st Ave North to the Elliot Bay Marina along the western edge of the Port's North Bay property. This route, which would likely remain open even after the Magnolia Bridge is replaced, will help motorists travel from Magnolia to the marina without using the bridge.



How much will the project cost?

In 2004, the Alternative A cost estimate was \$196 million based only on pre-design concepts.¹ The project team will update this cost estimate after a final bridge design is selected in Fall 2006, when a more accurate evaluation will be possible.

How is this project being funded?

Senator Patty Murray secured a \$9 million grant to evaluate possible replacement alternatives, select a preferred alternative, and complete final design work. The City of Seattle has several funding options and will assemble a construction funding package after environmental work and the TS&L Study are completed and approved.

Will you include bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the bridge?

Yes. The bridge configuration will be similar to today's, with a sidewalk on the south side of the bridge suitable for pedestrians and cyclists. The project will also include pedestrian connections from the bridge to Myrtle Edwards Park and Elliott Bay Marina, creating a shorter route between those popular walking and cycling locations. The project team is also considering including pedestrian look-out points along the bridge, offering people the opportunity to pause and enjoy beautiful city, water, and mountain views.

How has the community been involved in this project?

Since 2002, SDOT has hosted approximately 90 public meetings, presentations, and special events to inform the community about the project and ask for input. Team members have provided project information at Magnolia Summer Festivals, Farmers Markets, and other events. A community Design Advisory Group, representing many different local community and agency interests, was also created at the beginning of the project to help guide the project team. The Design Advisory Group has met 25 times.

Who are the members of the Design Advisory Group?

The Design Advisory Group includes representatives from:

- Bicycle Alliance of Washington
- Magnolia Chamber of Commerce
- Magnolia Community Club
- Magnolia/Queen Anne District Council
- Port of Seattle
- Queen Anne Chamber of Commerce
- Queen Anne Community Council
- Seattle Design Commission
- Seattle Marine Business Coalition & BINMIC
- Uptown Alliance & Friends of Queen Anne

¹ Please see the *Alternative A Cost Estimate Validation Process* fact sheet, dated Spring 2006, for more information.



What final alternatives were considered for replacing the bridge?

The process to identify the best Magnolia Bridge replacement alternative began in October 2002, when the project team brainstormed 25 possible replacement structures. After two rounds of technical review and an extensive public involvement process, the team selected Alternatives A, D, and C and a Rehabilitation Alternative for further study. Please note that the selection of Alternative A means that Alternatives C and D and the Rehab Alternative are no longer being considered.

- **Alternative A (Preferred Alternative)** will replace the bridge with a similar facility just south of the existing bridge.
- **Alternative C (Eliminated)** combined bridge and surface segments, arcing to the north through the Port's property.
- **Alternative D (Eliminated)** maintained the same endpoints as currently exist for the Magnolia Bridge, but arced the alignment to the north.
- **Rehabilitation Alternative (Eliminated)** involved bringing the bridge up to current load and design standards using elements of the existing bridge.

How did the City select a preferred alternative?

All four Magnolia Bridge Project alternatives were evaluated in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The City documented results of the evaluation in a series of environmental discipline reports, which can be found on the project website at www.seattle.gov/transportation/magbridgereplace.htm. Topics covered include, but are not limited to:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| ▪ Water quality | ▪ Historic and cultural resources |
| ▪ Air quality | ▪ Socio-economics |
| ▪ Noise | ▪ Plants and animals |
| ▪ Traffic | ▪ Fisheries |

How can I stay involved?

- Contact SDOT Project Manager Kirk Jones to be added to the mailing list: kirkt.jones@seattle.gov or (206) 615-0862
- Visit the project website for more information: www.seattle.gov/transportation/magbridgereplace.htm

